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## WORLD-POLITICS.

LONDON : ST. PETERSBURG.

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LONDON, *September, 1906.*

THE Irish policy of the present Government is one of its most interesting enterprises. The Government came into existence pledged, not to Home Rule, but to take a considerable step in the Home Rule direction. The omens for a strong and statesmanlike handling of Irish problems are more favorable to-day than at any time within my recollection. The Liberals are both sympathetically inclined towards the Nationalist view of Irish grievances, and at the same time independent of the Nationalist vote. Whatever they concede in the way of greater self-government will, therefore, be conceded voluntarily. It will not be wrested from them by threats or intimidation, or under pressure of the merely party view of politics. That is one circumstance that tells strongly on the side of calm inquiry and dispassionate policy. Another is the remarkable change that has come over English opinion within the last few years. I do not by that mean to imply that if either of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule bills were again to be submitted to the English electorate, a majority of the people would vote in favor of it. I do not think they would. On the other hand, it would be impossible now to rouse the opinion and passions of this country over any Irish question to that pitch of rancor and blind ferocity that prevailed two decades ago. It is a sign of the new reasonableness that, though we are on the eve of a momentous extension of Irish control over Irish affairs, the people, so far from being alarmed, so far from heeding the cry of the rock-ribbed Unionists to rally round the flag, are awaiting the Government's proposals with almost as much apathy as expectancy. When you hear Irish affairs discussed at all nowadays outside the House of Commons, you hear them discussed

rationally. That in itself is an immense gain. The fears and the catchwords of twenty years ago have been outgrown. There is a frank recognition of the evils which English misgovernment has inflicted upon Ireland. There is an honest desire to make reparation. There is an effort, almost pathetic in its futility, to understand the Irish character. The old contemptuous bitterness has vanished. The spirit in which the country approaches the Irish question has been revolutionized.

Nor, if we look to Ireland herself, are the tokens less propitious. There is an almost complete absence of crime and agitation. That great measure of appeasement, the Land Purchase Act of 1903, is slowly working its way through to a better order of things. Not that its operation is by any means perfect. The Estates Commissioners are not at one as to certain of the leading principles that should direct their administration of the Act. The staff of inspectors employed by them is undermanned. If you accept without a judicious reduction of at least sixty per cent. all that you hear from the landlord side, it is also inefficiently manned. There have been, at any rate, great and irritating delays in expanding the Act till it is capable of transacting the vast amount of business created under it. The machinery for working it, rather than the Act itself or its fundamental principles, needs improvement. At the present rate of progress, it will take from twenty to twenty-five years before the land of Ireland shall have passed into the hands of peasant proprietors. I imagine that Mr. Bryce, whose heart and intellect and energy are wrapped up in the successful conduct of his office, will find speedy means to simplify and expedite the workings of the Act. Landlordism in Ireland was played out. Everybody realizes that. To facilitate its final extinction, it may be necessary in one or two particulars to amend the Act of 1903. That Act made no provision for the reinstatement of evicted tenants, or for the compulsion of refractory landlords who refuse to sell. In both points it may hereafter be found advisable to bring in new legislation. But these, after all, are details. The grand fact remains that, taking them as a whole, both landlords and tenants have shown themselves more than willing to take advantage of the Act and to combine in the establishment of a peasant proprietorship. The land-tenure question is settled; and to be able to say that of Ireland means that its greatest source of internal

strife is dammed at the fountain-head. There are those, I know, who still take a gloomy view of the future; who insist that the tenants are paying too much for their land; that the Government sooner or later will be unable to collect its instalments of the purchase money, and that a no-rent campaign is something more than a chimera. There are also those who prophesy that the landlords, when once they have pocketed their purchase money, will make haste to get out of the country, and so deprive it of the advantages of a resident cultured class. I do not believe these forebodings. Thousands of Irish peasants purchased their holdings before the Act of 1903 was dreamed of. In hardly a single instance has there been a failure to remit punctually the instalments due to the State. Peasant proprietorship brings such energy and enterprise into the cultivation of the land that its value and its resulting yield are nearly trebled. As for the landlords, those who were absentees before the Act will continue to live abroad. But those who were residents before the Act, unless I am wholly mistaken, will continue residents still. Why should they leave? There are no more delightful people on earth to live among than the Irish and no more delightful country than Ireland. Living is cheap, and those three props of an aristocracy, shooting, fishing and hunting, are cheap and abundant also. Why should they desert the ancestral house and demesne merely because the tenants, with whom they were always at war, have become proprietors, with whom they can live at peace?

Speculations such as these may wait. The outstanding feature of the present situation is that the passing of the Purchase Act of 1903 has produced what is known in American politics as an era of good feeling. It does not, of course, extend to all sections and classes and creeds. But the Purchase Act, by uprooting the most penetrating cause of dissension in Ireland, has at once supplemented and been supplemented by those other factors that were gradually creating an atmosphere of cooperation and good will. Among those other factors, I would give the first place to the admirable work of industrial and agricultural betterment that is being carried on all over Ireland by the Department of which Sir Horace Plunkett is the head, and by the Irish Agricultural Organization Society, of which he was the founder. Men must, indeed, be utterly under the curse of politics when they will deny the necessity, or seek to impede the workings, of co-

operative creameries, dairies, village banks, the development of the coast and inland fisheries, the building of a pier here and a breakwater there, and the thousand and one practical improvements that will have to be introduced before the peasants are able to make the most of their new position, and before Ireland can recover the industrial instinct. It is the fine achievement of Sir Horace Plunkett to have opened up, outside of politics and religion, a field of labor which lays North and South, Protestant and Catholic, Unionist and Nationalist, landlord and tenant, farmer and laborer, the town and the country, under impartial contribution. This has had already, is having now, and in the future will have still more, an immense and mellowing influence. It is assisted by that disenchantment with the old type of politics that set in after the catastrophe of Parnell's fall, and has not been lessened by the internal bickerings in the Nationalist ranks. Ireland is taking her politics quietly and is interesting herself in other things besides.

Another factor that will help the present Government in its Irish policy is the growth of a moderate and rational spirit among both English and Irish Unionists. To Lord Dunraven is chiefly due the credit for the organization of this new spirit. He has gathered around him a considerable body of opinion, that is Unionist in the sense that it is opposed to two separate legislatures, but is Nationalist in the sense that it advocates a far greater control of Irish affairs by Irishmen. The Unionists who agree with Lord Dunraven's views realize that Unionism, as a policy of mere negation, is over and done with; that, if it is to have any future at all, it must show, not only sympathy with the aspirations of the majority of the Irish people, but also constructive ability; and that there are gross abuses and extravagances in Irish administration that can be, and ought to be, remedied without impairing the Union or the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. It is an open secret that there were more than one member in Mr. Balfour's Cabinet who shared these views. Mr. Wyndham, the Irish Chief Secretary, was forced by the extreme Ulsterites to resign office, simply because he believed, and was ready to act on his belief, that the time had come for a measure of administrative and financial devolution. The task of the present Government is to take up Mr. Wyndham's policy where he was obliged to drop it, and to carry it further than he

would ever have ventured to. In doing so, the extreme Unionists, who hardly yet realize that the question of whether Englishmen or Irishmen are to govern Ireland has long ago been settled against them, will fight Mr. Bryce and his colleagues with all the old-time fury. But moderate Unionists, and there are many of them, will sympathize with the Government, will support it, or, at least, will abstain from opposing it. As for the Nationalists, without abating in any way their claim for a separate Parliament, they will take what they can get.

The details and even the scope of the Government's Irish policy are still an official secret. We only know on the assurance of the Under-Secretary, Sir Antony MacDonnell, that next year is to witness the fulfilment of those hopes which many of the best Irishmen have for long entertained. This oracular way of putting it has whetted speculation, and aroused a multitude of conjectures. I believe it will be found, roughly speaking, that, while the Union remains untouched, an Irish Council, consisting for the most part of elected members, with a minority of nominated members, will be created to control the administration of Irish internal affairs, and to have the spending of all the moneys raised by taxation in Ireland, and not allocated to Imperial purposes; and that Ireland will thus come to occupy, from the financial and administrative standpoint, very much the same position towards the United Kingdom that the province of Bengal or Madras occupies towards the Government of India. To this general control over all local affairs, there is one exception to be made—the police will remain, as they are now, an Imperial force and will not be subject to the new Irish Council. At the same time, they will probably be considerably reduced; and I imagine that, when Mr. Bryce's Bill becomes law, they will stand at not more than seven thousand. Otherwise, Irishmen will be given virtually complete control over their local affairs. If the Imperial Government were to say to the Irish Council, "About ten millions are raised from Ireland by taxation. We keep two of these millions for Imperial purposes and we hand the remainder over to you. There are certain fixed charges upon it that will have to be met, but the balance which we reckon to be about four or four and a half millions a year will be placed unreservedly at your disposal for a term of five years"—if the Imperial Government were to say this to the Irish Council, and were to allow Ireland

to have the benefit of whatever savings might be effected by Irish administration, it would clearly be giving Irishmen a far more extensive control over their own affairs than they at present possess; it would stimulate them to an efficient and economical administration; and it would result in the accumulation of a large annual sum of money that could be applied to the task of Irish development at the discretion of the Irish Council. This, or something like it, is probably what the Government are meditating. If at the same time they reorganized the wretched system under which Ireland is misgoverned through forty-five overlapping, over-manned Boards and Departments, and if they placed Irish private Bills in Parliament as fully under the control of an Irish Committee as Scotch Bills are under the control of the Scotch Committee, they would, I believe, be laying the foundations for a settlement of the Irish question that would endure for twenty years. On one point, at any rate, every one seems agreed, and that is that "something must be done." It is felt on all sides that Ireland is at a crisis of her fate, and that now is the hour to clear the ground for that steady constructive work which can alone stop the appalling drain of emigration, and make of the country a place in which Irishmen may live and earn a living wage.

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ST. PETERSBURG, *September, 1906.*

POLITICAL and social chaos, without a creative spirit moving over the face of the welter, would seem to be a fairly correct description of the present condition of things in Russia. It is utter anarchy, with no strong man, no efficacious social force, to evolve order. The bomb and the "Browning"\* are the symbols of the transitional state from civilization to savagery; "hands up" is the war-cry; fire and blood are the accompaniments of the movement misnamed emancipatory. The committee of the Moderate Liberal Party writes:

"Human life is set at naught: tens, nay hundreds, of murders are daily committed; incendiarism, rioting, robbery, are spreading more and more throughout the country; the influence of law and authority is undermined; falsehood, calumny, deception, have blunted the moral sense; enmity and mutual hate have acquired such dimensions that they merge into epidemic madness. Parallel with the unavoidable on-

\* The name of a revolver which the Russian revolutionists have adopted.

slaught against the antiquated political fabric goes a struggle against every kind of political *régime*, the combat for political and civil liberty often takes a direction which can lead only to the loss of all liberty, the campaign for the economic and cultural interests of the masses, in the forms which are now being imposed, threatens to sweep away the remains of material well-being and culture and to ruin the nation; while the sanguinary methods of warfare are poisoning the public conscience, and sowing in the souls of the people the seeds of future hatred, of future quarrels and violence. . . . The people themselves can alone save our fatherland from destruction; without the cooperation of the people no Government can tackle such a problem."

How difficult the task has become, only those who have recently travelled in the Empire can fully realize. A few concrete pictures, however, may enable the American public to form a more or less adequate notion of the difficulty. The first is a scene in the daily life of Warsaw, where the destructive forces are perhaps stronger than in any other part of Russia, except the Caucasus. The sidewalks of some streets are occupied by dragoons, artillerymen, foot-soldiers armed to the teeth, while the public walks in the middle of the roads, where, in peaceful times, carriages and automobiles roll. At eight o'clock in the evening, all doors and gates are shut, theatres are empty, trade and commerce are stagnant. Merchandise ordered from Warsaw cannot be forwarded. The street-cars are daily held up and the conductors forced to hand over their takings to the revolutionists. The Government spirit-shops are guarded by five or six men, but they might as well be protected by painted wooden soldiers.

It is two in the afternoon. Along the "New World"—one of the most frequented thoroughfares of Warsaw—the traffic is brisk. Hard by is a Government spirit-shop. Facing it stands the patrol, composed of four men and a non-commissioned officer, all of them holding their loaded rifles, not on their shoulders nor at their feet, but horizontally. They are ready to fire, to march, to attack or defend at a moment's notice; but, meanwhile, everything is quiet around them. Suddenly, however, a number of stalwart young men are in their midst, but so suddenly have they appeared that one might feel tempted to think them an apparition from the other world, were it not that they are armed with Brownings, one of which is aimed at the forehead of each soldier. "Stand still. Don't budge, or you shall die," exclaims one of

the youths. And the warriors stand motionless, as though a Circean spell had bound them. Meanwhile, the public is sidling off quickly, quietly, leaving the street almost deserted. It is not wholly deserted, however, for on the opposite side stands a group of curious, undaunted onlookers. It needs courage thus to remain, but they evidently have it. And yet they stand as though they were ready to run at any moment. Meanwhile, the money in the cash-box of the spirit-shop is being taken, swiftly and silently, while the servants of the Crown stand looking on with arms raised on high, pale faces and tightly pressed lips. And in the street the soldiers are still in the quasi-cataleptic pose which they took up when the words of command were first uttered by the head of the Browning gang. Now the plunderers have done their work and are leaving the shop. "Comrades, that will do. Get ready. We are off." "All right," is the reply. And the money-grabbers have gone. "And now we must be going," cries the leader of the Brownings. "Be quiet. Woe to you if you budge. Remember." Thereupon the striplings walk backwards five, six, ten, twelve paces, still keeping the revolvers pointed at the soldiers; then they turn swiftly and run like hares. But the Tsar's warriors, too, have recovered life and activity, as by the waving of a magician's wand. They level their rifles and . . . a number of reports are heard in quick succession. The smoke-cloud lifts; and on the ground, in various positions, lie the corpses of the soldiers. The curious "onlookers" on the opposite side of the street are now in full flight, and in their hands are smoking revolvers. On the following day the newspapers publish a short, dry telegram, headed "Pillage in Warsaw."

The attitude of the Russian press calls for comment. One of the least respectable of the opposition organs called upon its readers to admire the heroism of the assassins at the Premier's house, and to sympathize with them for the sufferings their wounds must have caused them! On the other hand, one of the most respected newspapers, the organ of Professor Miliukoff, passing in review all the measures which the Government might take in order to repress such deeds, is criticised for having made fun of each and every one of them, and treated the matter flippantly. The "*Novoye Vremya*" wrote:

"Jester, desist! You are making fun of blood. You are sniggering at the shattered limbs of the lifeless and the half dead, at the old

men and the children. It is thus that the organ, inspired by the professor of Russian history, Miliukoff, derides, in the discourses of its professional clown, the grief of Russia mourning for the victims of the 25th of August."

The blood bath in Warsaw which the revolutionists caused a few days before, killing off the policemen of that city at the sound of a trumpet, was actually extolled. One journal wrote:

"Almost by the waving of a magician's wand, in various parts of Poland, wholesale murders of police agents were effected. It was unprecedented, grandiose! There is something sublime in these mighty deeds of red terror. There is something magical in the simultaneity and swiftness with which the police were killed off. Enormous hypocrisy would be necessary to stigmatize with obloquy the martyr heroes who lay down their lives for the holy act of vengeance, heroes in whom one thought, one sentiment, is active—to be revenged upon the executioners, to free the fatherland from the executioners."

Those are city scenes. The crimes perpetrated in the rural districts, unprotected by policemen or soldiers, are equally disgusting, sometimes far more repulsive. There men and women are slowly tortured, and little children playfully put to death, by beings who profess to be promoting the sacred cause of liberty. In Bonhsky, a cashier was taken and tortured until he gave up the money of his employers. The revolution required it. In the Garvolinsky District, the partisans of liberty attacked the house of a man named Rapp, and tortured his wife by burning the soles of her feet with candles. In the south of Russia, there is a flourishing district which surrounds the iron-works founded many years ago by a Welshman, named Hughes. On the night of August 31st, a wedding was being celebrated there, and, just when the dancing was in full swing, three lads entered and one of them threw a bomb on the floor. The bride, her mother, brothers, uncle, two sisters, eleven guests and a baby were grievously wounded. The bomb-thrower, himself wounded, was arrested, but escaped during the night.

The Empire, until recently one and indivisible, is at present split up into three active forces: the Imperial Government, the Duma or parliamentary opposition and the Revolutionists. By the surviving fittest of these three will the destinies of the Russian people ultimately be shaped. The fourth factor, the great sluggish mass of peasants, will at most supply those three armies with the needful recruits, remaining itself inert, almost indiffer-

ent. Unhappily all four sections of the population may be truly said to be tarred with the same Asiatic brush: that is to say, mingled with their admirable qualities are grave drawbacks of a kind so baleful that the good points are thereby often wholly neutralized. The Russian "intellectual," for example, is enthusiastic for liberty and, indeed, for much lesser boons. He can suffer all kinds of hardships for it, he is even ready to die for it; but he will not wait a reasonable time for it, nor use without abusing the degree of liberty which he has temporarily secured. Moreover, the Russian revolutionist is eager to ruin the country in order to free it from the *régime* of the Tsar.

Of the three forces mentioned above, the Duma has been weighed and found wanting. It disappointed the most moderate hopes. It feebly swerved from its own standpoint, served two masters badly, and successively denied them both. For instance, the parliamentarians at first condemned Witté's electoral law, which is undoubtedly most defective and unjust, declaring in advance that the deputies elected in accordance with it would not be true representatives of the nation. But, when they themselves were returned, they forgot this decree of disqualification, and deemed themselves representative enough to dismiss the Tsar's ministers, to pardon his would-be assassins, to limit his power in every respect, to suspend or violate the constitution, to break the laws and to carry on the government of the country without his cooperation. But they never once tried to improve the odious electoral law. That would have been a suicidal act, and they clung very tenaciously to life. Dependent upon the extreme element in the country, they feared to undertake anything, however patriotic, just or humane, which seemed calculated to estrange its sympathies.

Writing of the political parties which are now being formed for the first time and of the Russian intelligent public, Prince Trubetskoy sets forth his views very sincerely:

"Our entire social atmosphere is saturated through and through with flunkeyism. The flunkey by his very nature is a chameleon: he can dye himself in any hue, become a member of any party. His fundamental property is ubiquity. During the recent war he wrote patriotic addresses together with 'genuine Russian men,' but that did not hinder him from sneering and chuckling at our reverses, nor from sending addresses of greeting to the Mikado. He played first fiddle in all the reactionary undertakings of the 'Black Hundred,' yet he was not the

last among the 'reds' and in the competition for the prize offered to the most thorough radical, he was almost the winner."

So long as society is composed of gritless beings of this kind, there is little hope that it will save the nation.

The revolutionists, on the other hand, who number only some scores of thousands in a nation of 145,000,000, owe their powerful influence to the definiteness of their aims, their selfless devotion to the cause, their heedlessness of consequences. They pursue their end perserveringly, swerving neither to the right nor to the left. To the principles which they lay down they tenaciously cling; they recognize certain duties from the fulfilment of which they never shrink; fearing nothing, they can dare all. But they are mentally abnormal. For they mean to ruin Russia by way of regenerating it. They will treat it as the daughters of Pelias dealt with their father, cutting him in pieces and boiling him in Medea's caldron, whence he was to emerge renewed in youth and vigor, but did not. The Russian revolution is synonymous with anarchy. Its methods are inhuman. Its agents are killing off the servants of the monarchy, old and young, rich and poor, Governors of States and petty policemen. They butcher these and their families with perfect serenity, sparing neither sex nor age. They also take the lives of bystanders without ruth, mutilate or maim a hundred passers-by in order to blow up one man whose only offence is that he wears the Tsar's uniform. One day on the stroke of twelve they blew out the brains of most of the policemen on duty in Warsaw. Every day scores of constables, detectives, gendarmes, officers are being stabbed, shot, blown up, drowned, hanged or burned. Terror is now seizing hold of these obscure victims. Military leaders affirm that the bravest army will be put to flight if twenty per cent. of its soldiers are disabled by an attack. The annihilation of a smaller percentage will cause a similar panic in the ranks of undisciplined civil servants. The State cannot get men to sacrifice their lives for a few dollars a week. Soon there may be no protection for the inhabitants, except that which revolutionists, disguised as policemen, are willing to give. And then?

The Premier Stolypin is one of the sincerest patriots that ever held a ministerial portfolio. His good intentions are proverbial. Moreover, he means what he says, and his language abounds in humanitarian maxims. He would not wantonly hurt a fly, much

less an anarchist in trouble. Being a fanatical Liberal, he will eschew dictatorial methods even though the Empire perish in consequence. He worships legality and means to win or lose by relying upon the respect for law which he hopes to engraft on the people. His critics maintain that he might save the lives of the police and of the officials who are being daily "potted" like snipe or grouse, if only he would use vigorous methods or adopt measures that are unpopular. But he nobly withstands the temptation, and the tale of victims waxes greater and greater every day. He has had human beasts treated like gentlemen and tried in the fairest way. His maxim is: Do nothing of which an English or American statesman would be ashamed. He appeals to his agents to observe the law strictly, and he exhorts the nation to do the same. But his words fall upon deaf ears. The friends and defenders of the Monarchy are being killed off or frightened away. The revolutionists are getting their own partisans appointed in their place. Many of the trusted agents of the Government are therefore allies of the enemy, ready to open the doors of the fortress. The end of Tsardom seems at hand.

The only crime punished under M. Stolypin's *régime* is loyalty to the Tsar, fidelity to one's civic duty. Policemen, detectives, watchmen, officers, civil servants are caught between hammer and anvil, and annihilated. The anarchists attack them with bullets, and the Government protects them with words. Their places are being filled by revolutionists, and it is really to these wolves in sheep's clothing and to their love of law and order that the Premier is now confidently appealing.

It is in this way that the Cabinet is utilizing the months that must elapse before the Duma meets. Ministers resemble well-meaning reformers who, during a truce between two belligerent nations, should by means of suasive humanitarian discourses induce one of them to rely upon peace being concluded and to forego all preparation for continuing the campaign, while the other belligerent was working day and night to renew the war. Truly, the Tsar's position is tragical. He has received no thanks from his people for enormous concessions, and no help from his Ministers for his implicit trust. But close observers affirm that, of all the advisers to whom he has hearkened since the revolution began, there has probably been none so dangerous to him, his dynasty and the cause of Russian monarchy as Piotr Arkadyevich Stolypin.